

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Ferrari: Non-Citizen Drivers Licensing Bill May Be Revived



A measure (Senate Bill 189) that was killed by the state legislature's Government Administration and Elections (G. A. E.) Committee which would have helped prevent terrorists from obtaining Connecticut drivers licenses for use as identification cards still could be brought to the floor of the State House of Representatives for a vote,

state Representative Richard F. Ferrari, R-62nd District, said today.

The bill, which was inspired by the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, would have required the Department of Motor Vehicles to issue non-citizens limited-term licenses and non-driver photo ID cards that would expire with their federal visas.

The proposal could be brought up for a floor vote as an amendment to a related bill, said Representative Ferrari, who serves on the G. A. E. Committee.

"I was very disappointed that most of my Democratic colleagues on the committee voted to kill this legislation," said Representative Ferrari, who is considering offering the measure as an amendment in an upcoming House session. "It was not an anti-immigrant bill and it would not have adversely affected any non-citizen who is living in Connecticut legally. It was intended to prevent terrorists from using Connecticut drivers' licenses as identification cards to enable them to move freely about the country."

"I would remind the Democrats who opposed this bill that the terrorists responsible for the 9 / 11 attacks had obtained drivers' licenses in other states and were using them for identification purposes. While it might have inconvenienced some non-citizens living and working legally in Connecticut on federal visas, that does not equate to discrimination or unfair treatment. This bill was a common-sense response to the very real threat of terrorism that our country has been facing for more than a decade. It deserves a vote on the floor of the House and that is why I am strongly considering offering it as an amendment within the next few weeks," Representative Ferrari said.

The G. A. E. Committee killed the legislation on a mostly party-line vote (11 – 8) Monday, with Republican members supporting it and all but two of the committee's Democrats opposed. The bill was approved by the General Assembly's Transportation Committee (where it originated) on an overwhelming 27 – 1 vote March 21st.

The measure would have required:

- The Department of Motor Vehicles (D. M. V.) to issue limited-term driver's licenses and non-driver photo identification cards to non-citizen state residents that coincide with the period of their lawful presence in the United States.
- Applicants for commercial drivers' licenses to submit evidence to the D. M. V. that they are lawful residents of the state and defined "lawful resident" as a resident of Connecticut who is a U. S. citizen, a permanent resident alien, or a temporary resident alien authorized to work in the United States for a period of at least one year from the date of the license application.